

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCA-01 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 A-01 EB-07

MMO-04 /077 W

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R 151204Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9831

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 03997

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM LIVERPOOL DATED MARCH 12, 1976,
SENT ACTION LONDON, INFO BELFAST AND EDINBURGH, REPEATED
FOR YOUR INFO.

QUOTE

UNCLASSIFIED LIVERPOOL 044

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDIP, OGEN, CGEN

SUBJECT: FORTHCOMING CLOSURE OF CONGEN LIVERPOOL IN-
VOKES FUROR

REF: LONDON 02935

SUMMARY - THERE HAS BEEN STRONG REACTION FROM VARIOUS
QUARTERS IN OUR AREA TO RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF FORTH-
COMING CLOSURE OF LIVERPOOL CONSULATE GENERAL, WITH
EXTREME DISPLEASURE BEING VOICED. FOREMOST IN MINDS OF
LOCAL OFFICIALDOM IS WHETHER THE CITY OF LIVERPOOL IS
BEING DOWNGRADED DIPLOMATICALLY IN IMPORTANCE, AND MOST
QUESTION THE TIMING OF CLOSURE IN THIS BICENTENNIAL YEAR.
OTHERS, ESPECIALLY TRAVEL AGENCIES AND SHIPPING FIRMS,
EXPRESS CONCERN THAT SAME-DAY CONSULAR SERVICES CURRENT-
LY PROVIDED BY POST WILL NO LONGER BE AVAILABLE TO
CLIENTELE, WHO WILL INEVITABLY SUFFER INCONVENIENCE AND
FINANCIAL HARDSHIP. MANY INTEND TO USE PRESSURE ON
M.P.'S TO RAISE MATTER IN HOUSE. END SUMMARY.

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1. RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING CLOSURE OF AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL IN LIVERPOOL ON MAY 28 HAS GENERATED CONSIDERABLE FUROR AMONG LOCAL OFFICIALS, ORGANIZATIONS, TRAVEL AGENCIES, SHIPPING FIRMS, AND INDIVIDUALS. OFFICIALS BEMOAN THE FACT THAT THE CITY OF LIVERPOOL, AFTER SUCH A LONG HISTORY OF CLOSE TIES WITH U.S., IS TO LOSE THE CONSULATE GENERAL, AND QUESTION WHETHER THE PERMANENT CLOSING OF ITS DOORS, OCCURRING DURING BI-CENTENNIAL YEAR SIGNIFIES DECREASED IMPORTANCE OF THE AREA IN TERMS OF U.S. INTERESTS AND A GENERAL LOWERING OF OUR RELATIONS WITH THE U.K. OUR RESPONSE IS THAT U.S.-UK RELATIONS HAVE NEVER BEEN GREATER THAN AT PRESENT TIME AND THAT CLOSURE OF POST RESULTS FROM CONTINUING WORLDWIDE REVIEW OF U.S. OPERATIONS TO MAKE MOST EFFICIENT AND ECONOMICAL USE OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES. WE ALSO POINT OUT THAT CLOSING OF SEVERAL OTHER CONSULAR POSTS IN L976 IS UNDER CONTEMPLATION.

2. PILKINGTON BROTHERS LTD., INSTITUTE OF TRAVEL MANAGERS IN INDUSTRY (NW), SHIPPING FEDERATION, AND CUNARD BROCKLEBANK, AMONG OTHERS, HAVE EXPRESSED DEEP DIS-SATISFACTION AT APPROACHING POST CLOSURE AND PROSPECT OF HAVING TO CONTACT FAR-DISTANT EMBASSY IN LONDON FOR SERVICES. TRAVEL AGENTS WHO CATER TO VISA NEEDS OF CLIENTS AND COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES WHO ARE INVOLVED IN ASSISTING SHIPPING AND SEAMEN, ARE ESPECIALLY "APPALLED AT DECISION OF U.S. GOVERNMENT". THEY COMPLAIN THAT THE INESCAPABLE DELAYS THEIR EMPLOYEES, CLIENTS, AND OTHERS WILL EXPERIENCE AS A RESULT OF HAVING TO OBTAIN CONSULAR SERVICES FROM AN OFFICE SEVERAL HUNDRED MILES AWAY, AS OPPOSED TO OUR "SAME-DAY" SERVICE WILL PROVE A SOURCE

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SCA-01

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R 151204Z MAR 76
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OF EMBARRASSMENT TO THEM WHEN DEALING WITH "IMPORTANT
CLIENTS", SEAMEN, OR THOSE IN A HURRY TO OBTAIN A VISA

3. COMMENT: THE CURRENT LORD MAYOR OF LIVERPOOL, OWEN
DOYLE, ADVISED ME DURING AN INFORMAL CONVERSATION THAT
A PETITION IS PRESENTLY BEING CIRCULATED IN CITY, PRO-
TESTING CLOSING OF POST. PILKINGTON HAS INDICATED THAT
IT HAS WRITTEN TO AMBASSADOR ARMSTRONG, REQUESTING "SAME
DAY" SERVICE PRESENTLY PROVIDED BY AMCONGEN LIVERPOOL.
CHAIRMAN OF ITMI (NW), PETER LONG, HAS WRITTEN TO FOREIGN
OFFICE, PROTESTING CLOSING OF POST, AND ALL MEMBERS OF
HIS INSTITUTE HAVE BEEN ASKED TO BRING "EVERY PRESSURE
TO BEAR" BY USE OF MP'S TO PREVENT CLOSURE OF LIVERPOOL
OFFICE. WE UNDERSTAND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ARE PROTESTING
TO HOME OFFICE AND ALSO INTEND TO EXERT PRESSURE ON MP'S
TO RAISE MATTER IN HOUSE OF COMMONS. AMEMBASSY LONDON
SHOULD CONSIDER, WELL IN ADVANCE OF CONGEN'S CLOSING,
THE STRENGTHENING OF ITS STAFF COMPLEMENT TO ENABLE IT
TO COPE WITH PROJECTED ADDITIONAL YEARLY WORKLOAD OF
INTER ALIA, APPROXIMATELY 46,000 NIV ISSUANCES AND
REFUSALS, 2,550 PASSPORT AND CITIZENSHIP SERVICES, 850
NOTARIALS, 200 CASES INVOLVING SPECIAL CONSULAR SERVICES,
AND 120 WTDRS. PETERSON.

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ARMSTRONG

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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